

# WE BELONG DEAD

ISSUE  
ONE  
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Dracula Has  
Risen from  
The Grave

THE PHANTOM  
OF THE  
OPERA


The  
Wicker  
Man

HAMMER  
ON  
VIDEO



Plus lots more from the Classic Age of Horror

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Christopher Lee as  
Dracula from  
**Dracula AD 1972**  
by Dave Brooks

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Mike Murphy  
Gary Wilson  
& Jos for her  
support & love

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All contributions  
welcome on horror  
films from the  
1920's to the  
1970's. Send to  
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## EDITORIAL

In the words of the immortal Lugosi 'I bid you welcome.' Welcome to a world of cobwebbed castles, fog shrouded streets and eerie graveyards. Welcome to a world where Karloff was the Frankenstein monster, where Christopher Lee was Dracula and Peter Cushing was the evil Baron Frankenstein. To a world where Lon Chaney Sr lurked beneath the Paris Opera House and Lon Chaney Jr became a wolf when the wolfbane bloomed. Where Lugosi listened to the children of the night and Laughton evoked our sympathy for the unfortunate bellringer of Notre Dame.

A long forgotten age when Kong ruled Skull Island and Vincent Price held sway at the Masque of the Red Death. An age when Nosferatu repelled us and the Vampire Lovers attracted us. When the good Dr Jekyll became the evil Mr Hyde, when Karloff became Im-Ho-Tep; when Lee battled the devil as the Duc de Richleau; when Cushing was Dr Terror and Price was abominable as Dr Phibes.

Explore the House that Dropped Blood, the House on Haunted Hill, the House of Dracula and the House of Dark Shadows. Once again marvel as Dracula rises from the grave, Frankenstein creates woman, the devil rides out, the House of Usher falls, the Wolfman meets Frankenstein and the zombies have a plague... Welcome to **We Belong Dead**.

This fanzine covers the great and not so great horror films from the 20's to the 70's. This is purely a personal choice and I make no

apologies for that. These are the films I grew up with and influenced me. If it's modern horrors you want there are more than enough fanzines elsewhere covering films of the 80's and 90's. To me the classic age of horror films ended in the 70's. That's not to say there weren't any good horrors made in the 80/90's - just look at **Day of the Dead**, **Alien**, **The Thing**, **Silence of the Lambs**, **Cape Fear** et al.

But what can match the excitement of staying up late on a Friday night to see Karloff's **Frankenstein** or Raimon's **Phantom of the Opera**. Later on in my childhood I was introduced to the delights of Hammer horrors.

So, enjoy this first issue, let me know what you think and as Dr Pretorius said in **Bride of Frankenstein**, Here's to a new world of gods and monsters.



# ATMOSPHERIC HORROR

A clap of thunder, a whorl of rain and wind howling louder than the wail over the hill. The stuff that horror movies are really made of. As modern films concentrate on exploding heads and stretching skin, so Dracula wouldn't be complete without the gothic castle and terrified villagers.

Universal, Hammer and practically every horror movie before 1970 required a large slice of atmosphere to chill the audience in the theatre. In the 1970s hour (somehow a gothic film viewed via the video window in mid-afternoon doesn't give the same effect) Lugosi's Dracula *swings* among the castle's ruined stones in wondrous black and white *seems* far more unsettling than the realistic films of today set in apartment blocks. There are, of course, exceptions, for example the house in *FRIGHT NIGHT* has all the classic elements, down to windows which allow the sunlight to swarm onto the vampire, reminiscent of Hammer's original count. But there just seems to be something special about the classical sets which made performances by Lugosi, Karloff, Lee, Cushing and to some extent Price shine so well.

Even the streets of London haunted by Mr Hyde have a distinctive chill which surrounds them and the countryside around Frankenstein's lair is dark enough to house any creature of the night. Even the Mummy had an

atmospheric tomb and swamp. Roger Corman's *FALL OF THE HOUSE OF Usher* had the classic gothic home and his *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM* torture chamber put the audience in the right frame of mind to savour the full drama of subsequent events.

The sets allow a sense of threat absent from many of the more graphic movies. You can instantly tell if a Dracula film is a Hammer or not by the atmospheric and feel of the opening sequences. The fact that atmosphere has been used so well for so long proves the importance which it holds for true horror as

gothic films (or indeed novels). Even Chaney's Phantom had a brilliant lair and the effect can be seen in many of today's films who could forget the remote moor where the werewolf first struck in *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*, and how much horror *sees* place in the rain and wind.

But however hard they try, the modern films could never recapture atmospheres past like Hammer or Universal, whether it is Frankenstein's lab or a vampire's tomb, they captured them well.

Paul Dennis



# Dracula Has Risen From The Grave

A Review by Gary Sherratt





clumsy priest (Ewan Hooper) who is climbing the mountain to Castle Dracula with the Monsignor (Rupert Davies) to exorcise it of the Count's evil spell, which has already resulted in the death of a woman in the opening scene of the movie. The priest slips while climbing, falls and is wounded, blood from his wound trickling onto the frozen stream where Dracula is entombed, thus reviving the Count. After the usual chases and neck biting Dracula is destroyed by the time he, Paul (Barry Andrews), has been driven from his castle because of the dramatic irony of a son on a large crucifix.

As I have mentioned, the script is rife in the context of religious beliefs and prevalent icons, this theme also runs parallel with an atheistic message in the form of Paul, made evident when Paul, who is courting the aristocrat (Veronica Carlson), the Monsignors grand-daughter, has a theoretical discussion with the Monsignor on religion.

However, Paul's beliefs prove near fatal when he has a chance to destroy Dracula

neglected.

John Peter, a pseudonym, of Anthony Hinds produced a very literate script, which is, in my opinion, slightly better than *Dracula Prince of Darkness* (1966) which he also wrote.

Dracula is revitalised by a

Hammer's third Dracula movie and this time great Terence Fisher, the director of the first two classics was not involved. This time Freddie Francis took over the directors chair. Francis created a brilliant piece of Gothic horror cinema, a movie which has been underrated and much

with a well placed stake. But at the crucial moment he refuses to pray to God to make his strike decisive allowing Dracula to rise from his resting place with the stake in his heart, which he proceeds to remove, thus he is able to carry on with his evil deeds

vampires heart is the very end of a vampire" he said. The debate raged for a time but lee was eventually

The apocalyptic finale of the movie is dramatic, with Dracula impaled on the large cross, screaming at the top of his voice and tears of blood streaming from his eyes. This vision of horror is stunning and it's interesting to note that while this scene was being filmed a delegation arrived at the Elstree studios to present Hammer with the Queen's Award for Industry. The sight and sounds that greeted them must have given them second thoughts'

Rupert Davies provides the viewer with an interesting nemesis to Dracula which he conveys with conviction and charm. Although Peter Cushing is sadly missing in his most memorable role as Van Helsing, Rupert Davies makes up for this omission. Chris

Lee, in my opinion, will always be the definitive Count Dracula, a role he



# **"DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE"**

Christopher Lee protested vigorously about this scene at the time. "Everyone knows a stake through a

overruled and the scene survived which is just as well because it creates a truly atmospheric scene.



*Above: Dracula meets his gory end impaled on a giant cross  
Below: Dracula (Christopher Lee) is repelled by the Monsignor's (Rupert Davies) cross as Maria (Veronica Carlson) looks on*







stunning in there gothic nature, in particular the roof top scenes in the village are truly stunning matte paintings all brought to realistic life by Arthur Grant's photography using camera filters.

### ***Dracula Has Risen From the Grave*** is a great

has made his own with his advances with semi graceful sexual and menacing portrayal, but it was a pity he was given very little dialogue, which was a falling of the later sequels.

gothic movie and should be given more credit in the annals of horror movie history, it is well directed and well acted, far better so than many of today's gore movie dross.

Maria, played by the beautiful Veronica Carlson (once described by Peter Cushing as 'a beautiful piece of export') is Dracula's intended victim. She plays the role convincingly and with sexuality, as by now Hammer were injecting more sex into their movies. In this film it is made evident by Dracula's seduction of his victims - including Zena (Barbara Ewing) who greets his

The sets created by Bernard Robinson is Hammer regular in the 60's, he created and built many beautifully gothic sets for the company, are



# THE STORY OF A COLLECTOR

How well I remember that Saturday afternoon in 1974 when my mum popped into our local paper shop to get the local newspaper. I went to look at the American comics on their stand to see if there were any new issues of *House of Mystery* or *The Witching Hour*.

Suddenly I was confronted by a huge colour photo of Christopher Lee as Dracula, red eyes blazing, staring out at me from the cover of a new poster magazine. In no time at all I had handed over 20p and hurried home to savour the delights of *Monster Mag* number 1. From that day I was hooked.

I was soon scouring the local comic shops for anything on horror movies. My next discovery was a magazine called *World of Horror*. Both *World of Horror* and *Monster Mag* were printed on glossy paper with full colour photos, much superior in quality to their American counterparts.

Although *Monster Mag* had very little text it didn't seem to matter as the photos were brilliant. Even today I can't help watching a Hammer film without recognising a scene or two featured in *Monster Mag*. The magazine (*MM*) lasted for 17 issues before suddenly it stopped appearing at our newsagents. *World*

of *Horror* was a lot more informative with once again some great photos. Only fellow addicts can understand the thrill of finding a new monster magazine, or better still an old one!

One of my best friends in those days was our postman! I'd eagerly await the latest package full of old *Famous Monsters* or *Monster Worlds* I'd bought from contacts all over the country.

My collection grew by leaps and bounds. *Quasimodo's Monster Magazine*, *Legend Horror Classics*, the superb if short-lived *Monsters of the Movies* by Marvel, *Mad Monsters*, *Castle of Frankenstein* et al.

Perhaps one of the best of the lot was *House of Hammer* which first appeared on the scene in October 1976. Published by Top Sellers and edited by Dez Sinn, the people who brought out *Monster Mag*. It took a while new approach by having a comic adaption of a Hammer film every issue. After issue 18 the magazine changed its title to *House of Horror*, but after 2 further issues suffered another title change to *Halls of Horror*. The magazine disappeared for ages after number 23 but was eventually relaunched by Quality Communication who dropped the Hammer comic strip adoptions.

It eventually bit the dust with issue 30 in 1984.

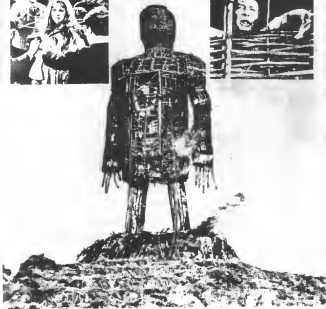
On the American side the granddaddy of them all, *Famous Monsters* finally finished with number 191 after Fory Ackerman left Warren. The longest running American magazine is now *Fangoria* (who produced a beautiful centenary issue), but I'm sure I'm not the only one who yearns for those great cover paintings of Karloff, Cushing, Kong etc. and more articles about our past. Ah well!

Eighteen long years have passed since that 12 year old boy was first introduced to the delights of monster movie magazines. A lot has happened since then - I'm now 30 and work as a printer. I've a wonderful partner, Jos, a mortgage and a cat called Oscar!

But there I am, still scouring the comic fairs searching for that old issue of *Famous Monsters* I still need, still eagerly waiting for the postman to deliver the latest package of delights. There really is no thrill like it. May I have many more years collecting to look forward to.

Eric McNaughton

How did you get started collecting magazines & watching horror movies? Write in and let us know.



# The Wicker Man

Directed by Robin Hardy  
1973

Cast: Edward Woodward,  
Christopher Lee, Diane  
Cillento, Britt Ekland, Ingrid  
Pitt, Lindsey Kemp.

A film which deserves its 'cult' status, *The Wicker Man* is the story of the clash of two religions, the new, as embodied by Christianity, and the old religions which have been around for thousands of years.

The story concerns Sergeant Howie (Edward Woodward) who arrives at the remote Scottish island of Summerisle in search of a missing girl, Rowan Morrison. He is met with silence and evasiveness every where he turns and his strict Christian beliefs are outraged at what he sees on the island.

In one very amusing scene Howie complains to Lord Summerisle (Christopher Lee) about the local schoolgirls who are jumping over a fire. "They're naked" exclaims Howie. "Naturally" replies Summerisle. "It's much too

dangerous to jump through a fire with your clothes on."

As the film progresses Howie becomes convinced that the islanders intend to sacrifice Rowan to their primitive gods to ensure their harvest doesn't fail a second time.

In fact it is all a clever trick the screenplay is by Anthony Shaffer who is particularly fond of keeping audiences guessing - just look at his play *Sleuth* for Howie himself is to be the sacrifice. In the end Lord Summerisle turns Howie's Christian beliefs back on him. "I believe in Jesus Christ and the life eternal" screams Howie, to which Summerisle replies: "That is good, for believing as you do we bestow upon you a rare gift these days - a martyr's death."

*The Wicker Man* of the title is actually based on fact as director Robin Hardy explained. "The Druids used the structure to burn their sacrificial victims. Historically the first mention of it is in Julius Caesar's *Diaries* in 55BC, when he noted Roman

prisoners of war were taken by the British tribes and burned as sacrifices.

Such was their commitment to the project that Christopher Lee, Robin Hardy and Anthony Shaffer did the whole thing for no money. Lee himself has said that Lord Summerisle was the best part he'd ever played. It was a brilliant script with wonderful lines. What more can an actor ask for?"

Screenwriter Shaffer is a great lover of horror films, but he didn't want the story of paganism set in the Middle Ages, believing a contemporary setting would make it all the more horrifying. It seemed to me to be a subject that I have never seen treated properly," he said in *Cinefantastique*, "with the Hobby Horse, the Teaser, the Punch or Fool figure, the Golden Bough, or the Sacred Oak myths, the force that intervenes in life, sometimes it demands a sacrifice sometimes it doesn't. I thought there was so much there in Celtic mythology that no one has

Lord Summerisle leads the singing as Howie burns





Lord Summerisle offers libation to the gods of the sea

ever laid a glove on, and I thought it was about time that someone did".

Although the story is based on the small island of Summerisle it was actually shot in 25 wide ranging locations. The fact that you never for one moment notice this is testament to a well edited film. Even Lord Summerisle's castle is a trick. The inside is Lord Stairs castle at Wigtown while the exterior is Culzean Castle in Ayr, 40 miles away. There is actually a real Summerisle although it doesn't appear on most maps and as Peter Snell of British Lion commented "is probably inhabited by two men and a goat".

The biggest problem during filming was the British weather. Although the film is supposed to be set in Spring it was actually filmed in October and November. During the

final sequence on the cliffs where the islanders sing as Howie burns, everyone was freezing, especially poor Edward Woodward who was wearing only a light shirt.

For the climatic scene Art Director Seamus Flannery built three Wickermen based on Robin Hardy's designs. Two were full sized, 60 feet high and one was just a large size trunk that was used for close-up filming.

Once filming had finished the problems really started. British Lion were not quite sure what they had on their hands. What eventually emerged after much cutting was a 102 minute version. This was not received well, especially by Christopher Lee who complained that a lot of the dialogue and story elements had gone

This was bad enough but then British Lion was sold and all the creative talent connected with *The Wicker Man* were locked out of the studios with no access to the film.

The new managing directors saw no value in the film commercially and refused to release it in this country. It was sent to Roger Corman in America for his opinion and Corman recommended a number of cuts. The film then ended up with a running time of 87 minutes. Gone were the opening scenes of Howie at mass. Gone also was Howie's first night on Summerisle, where Lee presents a suitor for Willow (Britt Ekland), the innkeeper's daughter. Instead Willows provocative dance to Howie, in the next room, was substituted, thus giving the impression that Howie was on the island only one night.

This new version was released on a double bill with Nicholas Roeg's *Don't Look Now*. The people involved in the making of the film knew nothing of this and were appalled at what they saw. "The film was just butchered" said Christopher Lee, "It was in a form that just didn't make any sense". Despite this the film received very good reviews and in 1974 won the Grand Prize at the 3rd

Festival of Fantastic Films in Paris.

*The Wicker Man* is a truly original horror film and if you get the chance try to see the longer version which the BBC showed recently. The 87 minute version is available on Warner Home Video.

Eric McNaughton

We welcome any articles on what you, the readers, regard as your favourite film or actor. Please send ideas, articles, artwork etc. to Eric McNaughton, 27 Ewart Road, Forest Fields, Nottingham



Christopher Lee  
as Lord Summerisle

# VIDEO VIEW

Each issue we'll take a look at a particular classic available on video. This issue we look at two versions of *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Lon Chaney's masterpiece has recently be re-released on video. Remastered and with a musical score by Nick Wakeman, it brings a classic of the 20's into the 90's.

Unfortunately, the modern music (a la *Metropolis*) doesn't always suit the film and I found a lot of the time it was better to watch it with the sound turned down. The different scenes are in different colour tones with the Masqued Ball scene in hand painted 2 colour technicolour.

All the memorable scenes are there: the unmasking; the Red Death at the Ball.

and the final chase past the still standing sets of Chaney's earlier success *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. There's also a nice little introduction by Christopher Lee under the Paris Opera House. No serious horror buff can be without this classic.

Available on RTV Video (RTV 1011).

Universal's lush technicolour remake of their silent version is a joy to look at. Unfortunately the story is nowhere near as good as the Chaney version.

The Phantom this time is played by Claude Rains as an arid



scarred violinist at the Paris Opera House. Rains gives a sympathetic portrayal as Erik/Clayton, but his briefly seen scarred face is disappointing compared to Chaney's grotesque make-up.

Once in the masked ball and the final chase, but the scene where Rains' saws through the chandelier is a classic.

Sadly this version has not enough Phantom and too much opera, and the film is more a vehicle for the talents of Nelson Eddy. Universal used many of the sets used in the Chaney version.

Despite all the drawbacks, the film holds some very fond memories for me as it was one of the first horror films I was ever allowed to stay up late to watch on TV, leading me to buy the glow in the dark Phantom of the Opera model by Aurora. So I'll always be grateful to this film which started my 18 year love affair with the horror cinema.

Available on CIC Video's 'Classic Collection' (VHR 1517)

Eric McNaughton

## QUOTE THE RAVEN...

Here's an easy quiz for the first issue. Next issue there will be poems but the questions will be harder. Just say where the following quotes come from & who said them. Answers at the bottom of the page.

- 1 We belong dead
- 2 I thought the world had seen the last of you
- 3 Here's to a son of the house of Frankenstein
- 4 Here we go gathering yule in May
- 5 To die to be really dead that must be glorious
- 6 What is the law? Not to shed blood. Are we not men?
- 7 He went for a little walk
- 8 The god of Mexico, the Devil himself
- 9 April's return
- 10 Behold my 4 horsemen of the apocalypse

Answers:  
1 "We belong dead" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
2 "I thought the world had seen the last of you" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
3 "Here's to a son of the house of Frankenstein" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
4 "Here we go gathering yule in May" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
5 "To die to be really dead that must be glorious" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
6 "What is the law? Not to shed blood. Are we not men?" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
7 "He went for a little walk" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
8 "The god of Mexico, the Devil himself" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
9 "April's return" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.  
10 "Behold my 4 horsemen of the apocalypse" is the famous line of the Phantom in the 1929 film.

# DARK TERRORS

Highly recommended is a new fanzine called Dark Terrors. Dealing exclusively with Hammer, the premiere issue is a labour of love by fan Mike Murphy. The main article is a look at Hammer's adaptions of Dennis Wheatley's works (*The Devil Rides Out*, *The Lost Continent* and *To the Devil a Daughter*). There's also a review of an interview with that gentleman of horror, Peter Cushing, the first part of an episode guide to the *Hammer House of Horror* TV series, an appreciation of the music of James Bernard and an article on Jaqueline Pearce. All in all well worth £1.50



A Hammer Fanzine

## DARK TERRORS - Issue Two - March 1992

includes *The Curse of the Werewolf*, *Ralph Bates*, *The Tales of Frankenstein*, *Hammer House of Horror* TV series, *Hammer at Oakley Court*, Letters, News and more!

For your copy please send £1.50 and our 3p stamp to: Mike Murphy, 'Avonard', Ventnor Terrace, St. Ives, Cornwall TR26 1HW

Please make cheques/PO's payable to M. MURPHY

## HAMMER HOUSE OF HORROR MARKETING

Great news for all Hammer fans! A new company called Hammer House of Horror Marketing is set to launch a series of vinyl models of all your favourite Hammer characters. The company is run by Wilson, a great horror film fan and Dave Prowse who shouldn't need any introduction to Hammer fans

The first kit to be launched in June will be a 15 and a half inch model of Christopher Lee as Count Dracula. This will be followed by Oliver Reed from *Curse of the Werewolf* and Dave Prowse himself as the creature from *Frankenstein* and the *Monster from Hell*

Future figures will include the Gorgon, the Reptile, Ingrid Pitt from *The Vampire Lovers*, Chris Lee's Mummy & the monster from *Curse of Frankenstein*. The Chris Lee Dracula will sell for £34.95 which is great value compared to the prices asked for American kits.

Gary and Dave eventually plan to produce masks, trading cards, t-shirts etc and we wish them all the very best with their venture. As soon as we have further details we'll let you know



Christopher Lee as Dracula (from *Curse of Dracula*) will soon be available in kit form



# THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

A look back at a silent classic  
by Eric McNaughton



## STORY

The Paris Opera House, centre of culture in the city of culture. Beneath this imposing edifice lies the dungeons and torture chambers of medieval Paris. In these catacombs dwells a spectre - the Phantom. The only person ever to have seen the Phantom is the scene shifter Joseph Buquet. 'His eyes are so deep' says Buquet, 'that you can hardly see the lived pupils. All you see is two big black holes, as if a dead man's skull. He's like, which is stretched across his bones like a drumhead, is not white but a dirty yellow

ink. The Phantom (Lou Chaney), lives only for his music and for his 'angel' Christine Daaé (Mary Philbin). Box 5 at the Opera House is always left empty for the Opera Ghost.

When the new managers of the Opera House let out the Phantom's box and refuse to Christine and instead to La Carlotta, he wreaks a terrible vengeance. As he sends the giant crystal chandelier crashing into the audience he tells the managers 'Behold! She is singing to bring down

the chandelier!'

Admiring the confusion, the Phantom spurs Christine away to his subterranean lair. There he plays her his own composition 'Don Juan Triumphant'. Christine is intrigued by the masked composer and while he is at the organ she rips off his mask. Horrified in horror at the death's head before her, the Phantom cries 'Flee! Your eyes - glut your soul on my accursed ugliness!' After promising to keep his secret she is allowed to return to the surface.

The following evening is the Opera's Masqued Ball. 'One night each year, all Paris-mingled, forgetful of class - the merry, mad Bal Masqué de l'Opera' - into the midst of the revelry strode a spectral figure robed in red. It is the Phantom

as the introduction to the Red Devil. He terrifies the revellers, frightens your dancing partners. He sends of a shiver in it. Thus does the Red Devil frighten your opponent! Later unknown to Christine, the Phantom brings to the same old Apollo on the Opera rooftop, his cloak following around him, as she dances hand in hand with her lover Raoul de Chagny (Norman Lloyd).

The Phantom abducts Christine again and takes her below the Paris Opera House. Hand, with the help of the mysterious 'Enigma' Arthur Legendre (Lawrence) who is on the trail of the Phantom, follow. The Phantom, however, is too clever and traps them in his iron clasp.

It only now, then Christine agrees to marry the Phantom. They are snatched and trapped



by a mob who have penetrated the Phantom's kingdom.

The Phantom flees, pursued by the mob, racing past Notre Dame, he is cornered on the banks of the Seine. Holding the crowd at bay by pretending he has a hand grenade, he opens his hand to show it is empty, and the mob is upon him. The Phantom's body is thrown into the Seine and sinks below the surface.

#### BEHIND THE SCENES

Lon Chaney's Phantom of the Opera is a true classic of the silent cinema comparable to D.W. Griffith's *Intolerance* or Charlie Chaplin's *Gold Rush*.

Certain scenes still stand out after 67 years: the Phantom's appearance at the masqued ball as Edgar Allan Poe's 'Red Death' resplendent in crimson cloak and grinning skulls mask, the Phantom on the roof of the Opera House listening to Christine betraying him to Raoul, his cloak billowing in the wind, and of course the famous unmasking scene.

Chaney had created many memorable 'monsters' in such films as *Treasure Island* (1920), *The Monster* (25) and *The Unholy Three* (25), earning himself the nickname 'Man of a Thousand Faces'. In 1923 Carl Laemmle, the head of Universal Pictures, had lured Chaney

from MGM to star in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and it was to Universal that he was to return for perhaps his greatest performance, that of Phantom.

The film is based on the novel by Gaston Leroux, written in 1911, and it was only by chance that this forgotten book became world famous through the medium of cinema. It was discovered by a researcher at Universal who was looking for a suitable vehicle for their star attraction, Lon Chaney.

It remains one of the most remembered films of the silent era. Universal spared no expense on the film, recreating the inside of the Paris Opera House and the maze of catacombs that made up the Phantom's underground domain.

The set was closed during the filming so no-one could get a look at Chaney's make-up. There were persistent director squabbles. Although Rupert Julian is credited as director, Chaney himself directed some key scenes and after a falling out the film was finished by William S. Hart.

Adapted by Ellen J. Clawson from Leroux's novel the screenplay omits the Persian prologue which leaves viewers wondering who the mysterious middle eastern girl (Lina) is.

The unmasking is a double shock for audiences. To viewers in the 40s who have seen *Get Out* since it may seem plain, while at the time it caused an outrage. Women fainted and as Carlos Claret stated 'whether reported faintings in the audience were real or dreamed up by

Right-The Red Death enters the Masqued Ball





**Above** The famous unmasking scene. High: The phantom gets from the mob in the film finale.



Universal. Chaney's characterisation was everything the public had come to expect of him.

To achieve the hideous visage of the deformed Phraoson, Chaney used false teeth, wires which were forced into his nose and eye sockets and tape to drag back his nose, exposing his nostrils. The addition of celluloid discs to distort his cheekbones and wire plunges to draw back the corners of his mouth completed the grueling make-up.

Chancy himself was modest when discussing his extraordinary skill. "In *The Phantom of the Opera* people exclaimed at my weird makeup," he said. "I achieved the Deaf's Head of that role without wearing a mask. It

was the use of pinstripes in the right shades and the right places - not the obvious pinstripes of the face - which gave the complete illusion of, horror....I've never worn a mask in my life, save at Halloween parties. It's an art, but not magic."

Amazingly for a silent film, some of the scenes were in colour. Admittedly, primarily compared to today's sophisticated colour palettes, during the 20s they were a sensation. A lot of the colour in the film appears in the grand opera scenes, but the most outstanding thing about *Yellow* remains the sequence that shows Chaney's hero being burnt upon the grounds of the British red.

The British film critic Michael Shelden wrote in 1975, "The

most dramatic sign of it in the circumstances when I first saw Lou Ligner, spinning round and his playing of the organ in the Paris Opera to display his angled, rounded, shell-like shape to Mary Dorian who, as Christian, had danced unmasked ball<sup>2</sup> that night; her on-end experience has led with me to *Shostakovich* 10.

Actions in the museum scene fall into two categories. First, the characters come down through the chandelier and remain out of the classical images of the museum, appearing on a par with visitors. First appearance as the Frankenstein monster Kong and the Chinaman, Belding and Christopher Lee, and Peter Cushing, Belding is out in the middle of Hammer's *Dracula*.

There could be no more during  
graduation there this

# BRAM STOKER'S COUNT DRACULA

Directed by Jess Franco  
1979 Cast: Christopher Lee,  
Herbert Lom, Klaus Kinski,  
Marie Rohm, Jack Taylor

This film may be a lot of things but it certainly is not Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. About the only part that remains faithful to the original is the opening section set in Transylvania.

Although for a change Christopher Lee does actually portray the Count as Stoker described him, grey hair, moustache and all. And he has more to say in this film than in all seven Hammer *Dracula*s put

together.

Once the film moves away from *Dracula*'s castle it goes downhill and becomes very bizarre indeed. For example, Jonathan Harker, last seen leaping out of Castle *Dracula*'s windows, wakes up in Van Helsing's mental asylum (!) in London. He asks Dr Seward how he got there, to which Seward replies that Harker was found in a stream near Budapest! What are we to deduce from this? That Harker floated back to England? And why is he in a mental hospital? (Try to ignore the fact that most of the

me with the impression that Van Helsing was the biggest lunatic of all!)

After his heart attack he ends up in a wheelchair, though after a couple of scenes this is quickly discarded when he can miraculously walk again. At one point Van Helsing even enlists the support of the Home Secretary. Now I know that government ministers are all complete idiots, but surely no Home Secretary would ever believe that the country was under threat from a vampire!

In a film full of bizarre scenes, the weirdest of all occurs when Harker, Seward and Quincey Morris (yes at last a *Dracula* film featuring Quincey Morris) track the Count to Carfax Abbey. They are suddenly confronted by a room full of stuffed animals (I had you not) that suddenly start swaying to and fro accompanied by a soundtrack that sounds like radio interference. Just what the hell these stuffed animals are going to do is anyone's guess. There's even a stuffed ostrich! Now I ask you seriously, what fearless vampire hunter is going to be scared by a stuffed ostrich?

Jess Franco seems to be obsessed with zooming his camera in and out of scenes, and everybody moves so bloody slow that I was tempted to watch the whole film in fast forward.

If you love Stoker's novel keep well away from this film and stick to Hammer's *Dracula* movies, which at least were fun.

Eric McNaughton



CHRISTOPHER LEE      JESS FRANCO

HAMMER



ON VIDEO

To those of us who are great fans of Hammer films, the video was a godsend. No longer do we have to wait for months for our favourite Hammer films to appear on our local TV station (usually in the early hours of the morning!). We can now watch them, when and where we like.

The sad thing is that not all Hammer's horror films are yet available on VHS. The problem with the films is that the distribution rights aren't owned by Hammer Films. This means that whereas *Dracula Prince of Darkness* through to *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* are available, the first of the series, *Dracula*, is not.

Likewise the availability of Hammer's *Frankenstein* series is patchy. You can get *Curse of Frankenstein*, *Revenge of Frankenstein*, *Frankenstein Created Woman* and *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* but not *Evil of Frankenstein*, *Horror of Frankenstein* or *Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell*.

Similarly, you'll be lucky to find

Hammer's superb *Vampire Lovers*, whereas the vastly inferior sequel *Lust for a Vampire* can be picked up at most video shops.

The Warner Brothers series is about the largest collection of Hammer films available on a single label. The collection comprises *Dracula Prince of Darkness*, *Dracula Has Risen From The Grave*, *Taste the Blood of Dracula*, *Scars of Dracula*, *Dracula AD 1872*, *The Satanic Rites of Dracula*, *Frankenstein*

*Must Be Destroyed*, *Quatermass and the Pit*, *The Devil Rides Out*, *Lust for a Vampire*, *Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde* and *Curse of Frankenstein* (although I've searched in vain for a copy of this, so it may be deleted). Also in the series for some bizarre reason is *Zoltan Hound of Dracula* which is definitely NOT a Hammer film.

Also available on various labels are *Revenge of Frankenstein*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Demons of the*



*Mind, Curse of the Mummy's Tomb, The Gorgon, Plague of the Zombies, Frankenstein Created Woman, Countess Dracula, Hands of the Ripper, Vampire Circus and Twins of Evil.*

The following listings are by no means a definitive list, rather a rough guide to what's available. It may be that some of these titles are now deleted or unavailable for one reason or another. Any additions to the list would be more than welcome.

# **DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS**

*Directed by Terence Fisher 1966*

*Cast: Christopher Lee, Andrew Keir, Barbara Shelley, Francis Matthews, Susan Farmer, Charles Tingwell, Thorley Walters, Philip Latham, Walter Brown.*

After a gap of 8 years, Christopher Lee eventually returned to the role that catapulted him to international stardom. Sadly missing this time round was Van Helsing in the form of Peter Cushing. Instead we are introduced to the vampire hunting Father Shander superbly played by Andrew Keir. For some inexplicable reason Lee is given no lines whatsoever and is reduced to hissing and snarling throughout the film (although one story says that Lee was given dialogue, but it was so bad he refused to use it). Dracula is also given a red lined cloak as opposed to the all black one he wore in

the original film, which gave him a more bat like appearance.

Despite this, I can't help liking the film. Barbara Shelley especially gives a very convincing portrayal of a prim and proper Englishwoman who is turned into a snarling, sensual vampire. Unfortunately the same can't be said for the female lead Suzanne Farmer who gives a particularly wooden performance.

There are some nice references to Bram Stoker's original novel, especially in the character played by Thorley Walters, based on Stoker's Renfield character; and in the scene where Dracula opens his chest and tries to force Farmer to drink his blood. The ending is particularly inventive as Dracula is trapped on the moat outside his castle as the ice is shot from underneath

him, sending him to a watery grave.

87 minutes Warner Home Video

# **DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE**

*Directed by Freddie Francis 1968*

*Cast: Christopher Lee, Rupert Davies, Veronica Carlson, Barbara Ewing, Barry Andrews, Ewan Hooper, Michael Ripper.*

Dracula is resurrected from his watery grave by the blood of the local priest and proceeds to wreak vengeance on a Monsignor and his family. Some fine atmospheric sets and a very gory finale as Dracula is impaled on a giant golden cross. See review elsewhere in this issue.

88 minutes Warner Home Video







87 minutes  
Warner Home  
Video

## SCARS OF DRACULA

*Directed by Roy  
Ward Baker*  
1976

*Cast:*  
Christopher  
Lee, Dennis  
Waterman,  
Wendy  
Hamilton,  
Jenny Hanley,  
Christopher  
Matthews,  
Anoushka  
Hempel, Patrick  
Troughton,

## TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA

*Directed by Peter Sandy* 1969

*Cast:* Christopher Lee, Linda  
Hayden, Geoffrey Keen, Gwen  
Watford, Peter Sallis,  
Anthony Corlan, Isla Blair,  
John Carson, Michael Ripper,  
Ralph Bates.

making this film end the 'Michael Curson Michael  
Satan's Claw' any info on Michael Ripper

her would be appreciated).  
The church scenes are very  
atmospheric but Dracula's  
death is a little unusual - he  
falls onto an altar and dies!  
Watch out for the late Roy  
Kinnear in a smashing cameo  
as the man who collects

Strangely, this film doesn't  
follow on from the previous  
movie, as Dracula is back in  
his castle in Transylvania (for  
the first time since *Prince of  
Darkness*). Christopher  
Matthews (below) is the  
unwary traveller who ends

Set in England this time, the Dracula's ring and blood

Count is brought  
back by one of his  
disciples Lord  
Courtley (superbly  
ever acted by the  
late Ralph Bates).  
He sets out to  
destroy the three  
'respectable'  
gentlemen re-  
sponsible for  
Courtley's death.  
The instruments of  
his destruction are  
the men's own  
children (including  
Linda Hayden who  
seemed to drop out  
of sight after



up in Castle Dracula and falls victim to gorgeous vampire Anoushka Hempel. His brother (played by Dennis Waterman with the strangest accent I've ever heard) and his girlfriend (Jenny Hanley - remember her from Muggsy?) arrive at the castle after encountering the usual hostility at the local inn.

They manage to escape with help from Dracula's servant Klove (Patrick Troughton - the best ever Dr Who for my money), but Jenny Hanley is soon recaptured by Dracula who dies when struck by lightning (1). Gorgeous sets and quite a nice return to Hammer's earlier gothic style. The best scene, taken straight from Bram Stokers novel, is Lee climbing vertically up the castle wall. Just try and ignore the rubber bats!

92 minutes Warner Home Video

#### DRACULA AD 1972

*Directed by Alan Gibson 1972*

*Cast: Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Stephanie Beacham, Michael Coles, William Ellis, Christopher Neame, Caroline Munro.*

The beginning of the end for Hammer's Dracula series. A truly appalling film with only the prologue and Lee and Cushing's acting making it worth watching. To be fair the idea of bringing Dracula to the (then) present day was forced on Hammer by Warner Brothers. In retrospect it was disastrous and the film looks terribly dated now. The movie opens with a super prologue as Dracula and Van Helsing battle it out in Hyde Park of 1872. Dracula is eventually staked through the heart by a broken wheel.

One hundred years later, and Dracula is brought back by a black mass in the desecrated

church of St Bartolpha. The instigator of the mass is yet another disciple Johnny Alucard (I always wondered why it took Van Helsing so long to figure out the anagram). Determined to avenge himself on Van Helsing's descendants he eventually kidnaps his granddaughter Jessica (Stephanie Beacham) but is killed by Cushing in a pit of stake-

There are some interesting bits, like Alucard being killed in a shower, giving a modern slant to the legend that running water is fatal to a vampire. The film works best when in the eerily gothic church, but one can't help wondering why on earth Dracula stayed there when there was all of London to stalk.

92 minutes- Warner Home Video

#### THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA

*Directed by Alan Gibson 1973*

*Cast: Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Michael Coles, William Franklyn, Freddie Jones, Joanna Lumley*

Actually a much better film than its predecessor. This time Dracula is



planning to wipe out the world with a virulent strain of plague (and thereby presumably commit suicide). Van Helsing once again manages to stop him and lures him into a hawthorne bush before staking him. I'm not convinced Dracula, who had lived for centuries, would have so easily been fooled into running into a bush! But at least it was different. The scenes of the vampire women chained in the collar were quite effective and Christopher Lee had a bit more to say than usual, but it was a sad end to the Dracula saga.

84 minutes Warner Home Video

## THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN

*Directed by Terence Fisher 1957*

*Cast: Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Robert Urquhart, Hazel Court, Valerie Gaunt, Noel Hood, Marjorie Hulme, Melvyn Hayes*

The film that started it all. Cushing is the definitive Baron Frankenstein, stitching together his creature from bits of dead bodies. The scene where the Baron rushes into his laboratory and is confronted by the new-born monster ripping off its bandages is a classic of the genre. Jimmy Sangster who did the

screenplay went back to Mary Shelley's original novel for inspiration. Because Universal Pictures wouldn't allow their Frankenstein make-up to be copied, Phil Leaky (Hammer's make-up man) had to devise a whole new concept. There is little of the pathos of Karloff's monster, in fact it's very hard to feel any sympathy for Lee's creature at all. The epitome of gothic cinema which Hammer was to make its own over the next two decades. It was heavily criticised at the time of its release for all the gore. A true classic.

80 minutes Warner Home Video

## THE REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN

*Directed by Terence Fisher 1958*

*Cast: Peter Cushing, Francis Matthews, Eunice Grayson, Michael Gwynne, Lionel Jeffries*

Fisher, without doubt Hammer's greatest director, returned to create an unusual sequel to *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Whereas in the Universal films it was the monster who linked the films, Hammer made the Baron himself the link. He was once again played by the wonderful Peter Cushing. Saved from the guillotine he faced at the end of the first film, the Baron is up to his old tricks again, this time seemingly succeeding. However his creation (marvellously played by Michael Gwynne) is injured in a fight and degenerates into cannibalism. Probably one of





the most thought provoking films of the series proving you don't need a shambling monster to make a good Frankenstein movie.

87 minutes Warner Home Video.

### FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN

*Directed by Terence Fisher 1968*

*Cast: Peter Cushing, Thorley Walters, Susan Denberg.*

My personal favourite of the series, possibly because it was the first time my parents allowed me to stay up to watch a Hammer horror on late night tv when I was a kid. This is everything that made Hammer great - Fisher's direction, superb sets, Cushing as the Baron and a wonderful gothic feel to the whole thing. The story deals with soul transference this time with the Baron putting the soul of a man wrongly executed for murder into the rebuilt body of his girlfriend (confused yet?) The soul of the dead man uses the woman's body to avenge him/herself on the three tuffs who actually committed the original murder (now I think I'm confused!). Cushing is, as usual, superb and Thorley Walters is just right as his humbling assistant.

87 mins Castle Pica

### FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED

*Directed by Terence Fisher 1969*

*Cast: Peter Cushing, Simon Ward, Veronica Carlson, Maxine Audley, Thorley Walters, Freddie Jones.*

Hammers fifth Frankenstein again teamed Fisher and Cushing. The Baron is at it again! This time he's a downright nasty piece of work, even raping Veronica Carlson in one scene. I think this scene just didn't fit and was totally out of character for the Baron. Freddie Jones gives a very sympathetic portrayal as the man whose brain is in someone else's body. This film was followed by the only non-Cushing Frankenstein, the tongue-in-cheek *Horror of Frankenstein*.

87 minutes Warner Video

### LUST FOR A VAMPIRE

*Directed by Jimmy Sangster 1970*

*Cast: Ralph Bates, Suzanna Leigh, Michael Johnson, Barbara Jefford, Yutte Stenstaad, Mike Raven.*

Originally to be directed by Terence Fisher, who withdrew because of a broken leg, and to have starred Peter Cushing in Ralph Bates's role (he didn't make the film due to the illness of his beloved wife Helen), one can only wonder what the film might have looked like. It's doubtful that even Fisher could have got a good performance from Yutte Stenstaad, who looked gorgeous but couldn't act to save her life.

The film is a sequel to Hammer's earlier *Vampire Lovers*, and is once again based on J Sheridan Le





Fear • novel  
 Carna • Set in a  
 girls' boarding school  
 where girls plenty of  
 excuse for nudity!  
 the story concerns the  
 enigmatic  
 vampire Carna  
 (Stensgaard) who  
 preys on her fellow  
 schoolmates. She is  
 brought back from  
 the dead by Mike  
 Rynn, whose eyes in  
 close up look  
 suspiciously like  
 Christopher Lee!  
 After the obligatory  
 bloodletting Carna  
 is impaled by a  
 burning roller. Nice  
 atmosphere but an  
 absolutely appalling  
 'pop song on the

middle of the film, which to  
 give him his due, Sangster  
 ought have taken removed.

86 minutes. MCA Home  
 Video.

## DR. JEKYLL & SISTER HYDE

Directed by Roy Ward Baker  
 1971

Cast: Ralph Bates, Martine  
 Beswick, Gerald Sims, Lorne  
 Packer, Judith Aiken, Neil  
 Patrick

An intriguing twist to an old  
 story helped considerably by  
 the remarkable likeness  
 between Ralph Bates and  
 Martine Beswick. There is  
 for good measure one  
 element of Barker and Kline  
 and Jack the Ripper. Jekyll's  
 potion turns him into the  
 beautiful but evil Sister  
 Hyde who in turn kills  
 pretenses to provide bodies  
 for the great doctors



experiments. Well acted all round with the screenplay by Brian Clemens, more famous for his *Armchair* TV series.

94 minutes Warner Home Video

# **VAMPIRE CIRCUS**

*Directed by Robert Young*  
1971

*Cast: John Moulder Brown, Adrienne Corri, Laurence Payne, Thorley Walters, Lynne Frederick, Elizabeth Seal, Anthony Corlan.*

One of Hammer's best films at a time the studio was rapidly on the downward slope. The vampires this time are occupants of a travelling circus who can turn into animals at will. Actually quite a gory film,

especially the ending where just about the entire cast got killed. This film will be featured in greater length in a future issue.

83 minutes Video Collection

# **CURSE OF THE MUMMYS TOMB**

*Directed by Michael Carreras*  
1964

*Cast: Terence Morgan, Ronald Howard, Fred Clark, Jeanne Roland, George Pastell, Jack Gwillim, Daphne Owen, Michael Ripper.*

The second in Hammer's mummy series and while not as good as *The Mummy* it stands as an entertaining and well made film in its own right. The well worn story of the mummy being brought

back to avenge the desecration of a tomb is given a new twist by the fact that the mummy's centuries old brother is alive and well in Victorian London. There's a great ending in the sewers beneath the city where the mummy kills himself and his brother by pulling down the roof.

81 minutes RCA

# **THE GORGON**

*Directed by Terence Fisher*  
1964

*Cast: Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Barbara Shelley, Richard Pasco, Michael Goodliffe, Patrick Doughton.*

After remaking the classic monster films of *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and the *Mummy*, Hammer decided to create a completely new monster and looked to ancient Greece for inspiration. A very strong cast and Fisher's usual superb direction make this an above average horror film. Peter Cushing for a change plays Dr Namara, the haddie, while Christopher Lee gets to play the good guy in the form of Professor Meister. Carla, the woman possessed of the gorgon's spirit is played by the



John Carmichael Property. © Hammer Film Productions Ltd.  
**VAMPIRE CIRCUS ADRIENNE CORRI LAURENCE PAYNE THORLEY WALTERS**  
**JOHN MOULDER BROWN ANTHONY CORLAN LYNN FREDERICK**  
Produced by PETER COOPER. Screenplay by ROBERT CLARK. Directed by ROBERT CLARK. Cast by John Carmichael.





small Cornish village. The man behind all this is the deliciously evil Squire Hamilton played superbly by John Carson. Unfortunately Diane Clare's performance is particularly wooden and you can't help wishing that Jacqueline Pearce wasn't given that role instead. Michael Ripper, as always, gives

his role all he's got. What Hammer film would be complete without a performance from Michael?

Undoubtedly the best scene in the film is the dream sequence in the graveyard. The zombies pushing themselves up from their graves is one of the truly great scary moments from cinema history. It has been much copied but, in my opinion, never equalled. And isn't it nice to see a film that shows foxhunters as the nasty bastards they are.

87 minutes Warner Home Video

beautiful Barbara Shelley, a stalwart of Hammer films in the sixties. She didn't actually get to play the role of the Gorgon herself due to the problems of costume and make-up changes (the part was played by Prudence Hyman). Well worth a viewing, one of the Hammer classics.

83 minutes RCA

## PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES

Directed by John Gilling  
1965

Cast: Andre Morell, Diane Clare, Jacqueline Pearce, John Carson, Brock Williams, Michael Ripper

Generally regarded as one of the true classics, not just of Hammer, but of the genre as a whole. Made back to back with Gilling's other Cornish horror *The Reptile*, it tells the story of strange goings on and disappearing bodies in a







was so well made, with obvious care to detail, that it's a shame Hammer never got round to making their other proposed historical horror *Vlad the Impaler*.

89 minutes Video Collection

#### **HANDS OF THE RIPPER**

*Directed by Peter Sasdy 1971*

*Cast: Eric Porter, Jane Merrow, Angahard Rees, Dora Bryan, Keith Bell, Derek Godfrey, Lynda Baron.*

In view of the fact that this was one of Hammer's goniest films, I was surprised to see it only got a '15' certificate on video. Another interesting film that mixes the Whitechapel murderer (or at least his daughter) and Freudian analysis (as espoused by Eric Porters character). There are some very bloody murders indeed: Dora Bryan is pinned to the door with a poker; Lynda Baron's prostitute has a handful of pins shoved in her eye; a maid has a broken mirror stuck in her throat; and even Porter is impaled with a sword. The cause of all this mayhem is the Ripper's daughter (Angahard Rees), who when she sees a shiny object and is kissed (reminders of the night her father killed her mother) turns into a homicidal maniac. She is eventually induced by the dying Porter to jump to her death from the Whispering Gallery of St Pauls Cathedral. Not one of Hammer's best but still worth a look.

85 minutes Rank Video

#### **COUNTRESS DRACULA**

*Directed by Peter Sasdy 1971*

*Cast: Ingrid Pitt, Nigel Green, Sandor Elia, Maurice Denham, Peter Jeffrey, Patience Collier, Lesley-Anne Down.*

Despite the very misleading title this is a rather good little historical horror film. Based on V. Penrose's novel *The Bloody Countess* it tells the story of the real life madwoman Countess Elizabeth Bathory. Bathory was responsible for the torture and murder of hundreds (no one knows for sure how many) of women in the belief

that the blood of virgins could keep her young. Her bloody exploits were finally brought to an end when she was tried, found guilty and walled up inside her castle (she escaped execution, the fate of her accomplices, due to her noble birth).

Sasdy's version loosely follows the same events with the difference that here the Countess actually becomes younger! The film marked a welcome return to the screen for Ingrid Pitt who gave a very convincing portrayal. For its time it was a particularly gory film, but it

## TWINS OF EVIL

Directed by John Hough  
1971

Cast: Peter Cushing, Dennis Price, Isabel Black, Mary Collinson, Madeline Collinson, Damien Thomas, Katya Keith, David Warbeck

Third in Hammer's *Carmilla* trilogy and a thoroughly enjoyable film mixing puritanism, witch hunting and vampirism. It features one of my favorites of all vampires Count Karnstein, as played by Damien Thomas (who incidentally would have made an excellent replacement for Christopher as *Dracula*).

Peter Cushing is outstanding as Gustav Weil, the fanatical leader of the Brotherhood. Indeed in this film the 'instruments of God' are just as nasty as the vampires. Former *Playboy* Playmates, the Collinson twins are there



more for their looks than their acting abilities. There are some fine set pieces, especially in Karnstein Castle and the finale is one of the most memorable ever put on film by Hammer. A film that provided plenty of good moments (and countless photos for *Monster Mag!*). This is what Hammer films were all about.

83 minutes Rank Video

## THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Directed by Terence Fisher  
1962

Cast: Herbert Lom, Edward de Souza, Heather Sears, Michael Gough, Ian Wilson.

After remaking most of Universal's classic horror films, Hammer turned to their *Phantom of the Opera* and ended up with their 1st financial failure. It was based more on the Claude Rains version than Lon Chaney's superb performance with Herbert Lom as the disfigured composer living this time, under a London Opera House, which unfortunately looks more like a music hall. Lom's *Phantom* is a sympathetic character, eventually giving his life to save his beloved Christine (Sears) from a falling chandelier. This might have been the film's downfall as the public just didn't want sympathetic



'monsters' Despite this it is a classic example of Hammer (& Fisher) at their best and Herbert Loms performance can't be faulted.

81 minutes CIC

## TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER

*Directed by Peter Sykes 1976*  
*Cast: Christopher Lee, Richard Widmark, Denholm Elliott, Anthony Valentine, Natasha Kinski, Honor Blackman.*

Hammer's final horror film, featuring a fine cast who are largely wasted. Based on Dennis Wheatley's novel it came a couple of years too late to jump on the *Exorcist* bandwagon. The ending didn't help either. Instead of the death of the antonic priest (Lee) as described in

the book, the film simply has Christopher Lee being hit on the head with a rock and dying! A sad end for the House of Horror

89 minutes Warner Home Video

## QUATERMASS AND THE PIT

*Directed by Roy Ward Baker 1967*  
*Cast:*

Andrew Keir, Barbara Shelley, James Donald, Julian Glover

By far

the best of Nigel Kneale's Quatermass quartet and for my money about the best and most intelligent science fiction film of the sixties. Andrew Keir plays Professor Bernard Quatermass this time round, replacing Brian Donlevy who essayed the role in *The Quatermass Experiment* and





## THE DEVIL RIDES OUT

*Directed by Terence Fisher 1967*

*Cast: Christopher Lee, Charles Gray, Patrick Mower, Paul Eddington, Nike Arrighi, Leon Greene.*

Without a doubt the Doc de Richleau is the best character Christopher Lee has ever played, after Lord Summerisle in *The Wicker Man*. For once on the side of good, Lee battles the powers of evil as personified by Mocata, brilliantly played by

The film did very well in Britain, but not so good in the crucial US market (where it was known as *The Devil's Bride*), leading Hammer to scrap any further adaptations, which is a shame because the film for me is one of Hammer and Fisher's best. In particular, the scene inside the magic circle is memorable as Mocata sends all the forces of hell against de Richleau and his friends, culminating in the Angel of Death himself. Wheatley himself was reported to be pleased with Richard Matheson's adaption of his book, which remains pretty faithful throughout

Charles Gray. This was to be the first in a series of adaptations of the works of Dennis Wheatley.

92 minutes- Warner Home Video

**Quatermass 2.** Excavation work at Habbes End underground station uncovers fossils of primitive humans dating back 5 million years (the film was called *5 Million Years to Earth* in the U" along with what is at first thought to be an exploded bomb.

The bomb turns out to be a martian spaceship, also 5 million years old, that crashed when London was just a swamp. The evil forces inside the ship are soon revived and leashed on an unsuspecting London. Barbara Shelley, as ever, is excellent in a very dramatic role, as is Julian Glover as the stubborn Colonel Breen. A very different Hammer film but highly recommended.

94 minutes Warner Home Video.

CHRISTOPHER LEE - CHARLES GRAY - NIKE ARRIGHI - LEON GREENE  
DENNIS WHEATLEY'S



PATRICK MOWER - EMEL FRANKSON-DAVIES - SARAH LAWSON - PAUL EDDINGTON

# DAWN OF THE DEAD

*Dawn of the Dead*, made in 1978 and the second film in George A. Romero's zombie trilogy proved to be a success worldwide and its popularity remains intact to this day. Much of this success, I feel, in America at least, can be attributed to the closeness to which Romero tapped into the anxieties of the nation at the time.

The climate in the 1960's and through to the end of the 1970's have been cited as among the most traumatic decades in American history. The 70's were still echoing from the sequence of political assassinations and violent confrontations on the streets between blacks and other groups that occurred in the 60's. The Vietnam War, costly, frustrating, and ultimately unsuccessful, plunged the nation into turmoil, while shattering the illusion of American omnipotence. Meanwhile America's economic supremacy was being eroded: there was mounting

concern over inflation, unemployment and the threat of an energy shortage. These experiences left Americans divided and unsure of themselves. Some carried the rebelliousness to the point of questioning the very moral and economic foundations of American society.

When George Romero was making his horror film he said "I got into my own ego thing on how *Night of the Living Dead* reflected the time it was made....I wanted *Dawn* to reflect the 70's a bit more". It was therefore a conscious effort by him to comment on the mood of the nation of that time. The themes on which he concentrates link directly

to the American psyche at the time, that of the uncertainty of the stability of society and social roles and the focus on materialism and consumerism.

In order to understand more fully how *Dawn of the Dead* achieves Romero's objectives and the way in which it acts upon the spectator it is important to explore the way in which horror works. For the audience sitting in the darkness the sort of involvement the film invites necessitates a certain switching off of consciousness and a losing of oneself in fantasy. This factor and the general agreement that horror films should not be taken too seriously



means that subversive implications and concern for reforming aspects of the social system can escape detection.

In *Dawn of the Dead* Romero satirizes society through presenting the idea that not only are the zombies the product of normality, but that it is no longer possible to view normality itself as other than monstrous. The monsters are represented by the zombies but because social apocalypse has occurred at the beginning of the film they are not presented as a threat to 'normality', rather as part-and-parcel of it. This idea can be seen at the beginning of the film when the television studio is on the verge of collapse: the situation is that the collapse was more a result of human pettiness and lack of cooperation than the actual zombie plague when Fran says "We've blown it ourselves," later, as Peter remembers how his grandfather used to tell him "When there's no more room in hell, the dead will walk the earth," a further reference to the theme of man's lack of morality as responsible for the apocalypse.

With the discovery of the mall Romero continues the central theme of portraying the system as lacking in morality. Romero is presenting the mall as a symbol for the

cheap, materialistic values that so often take precedence over traditional, romantic, moral and spiritual ideals of the twentieth century. Romero clearly views his protagonists takeover of the mall as a hollow victory in this light. For one thing the place comes at a high price - Roger is bitten by a zombie as he and Peter blockade the entrances, and he slides into a manicured, psychotic state. Furthermore Romero's protagonists lose something of their own morality as they gun down the zombies remaining in the mall with zealous cruelty motivated by greed.

Once inside the mall Romero is able to portray consumerism specifically as being something that is monstrous. With gleeful reverence he suggests that the zombies are the ultimate consumers, pointed to the absurd extremes of consuming people. Dave's liberal, friendship group has a distinct thematic context in this regard, garish brighter than life, day-glo blood spattered all over the place as zombies tear limbs and genitals from their victims and devour them like so many hamburgers from a fast food joint.

The zombies are dressed in the recognisable work clothes that define our role in a capitalist system, ie nurses, nuns, insurance

salesmen, softball players and so on, and they all gravitate toward the mall to stagger through the main concourse, clumsily riding the escalators, shuffle across the skating rink and stare longingly through the windows at the human protagonists. Even when locked out of the mall they continue to hang around. The shopping mall setting and the zombie shoppers' take a wickedly funny, satirical bite at American consumerism, but the humour also serves to humanise the zombies to some extent and undermine the clearcut distinctions between humans and zombies.

Romero's intentions in undermining the difference between humans and zombies is to show that all possess similar negative and destructive elements and that consumerism and the capitalist system is the driving force responsible for them. Peter at one point observes "They're after the place, they don't know why they just remember remember they wanna be here!" All three groups (zombies, protagonists and bikers) wish to possess and control the mall. They share a common conditioning, all are predators and all are contaminated and motivated by consumer greed. The motorcycle gang's mindless delight in violence and slaughter is

anticipated in the development of Roger who delights in slaughtering zombies as a display to his friend and who, in the course of taking over the mall, is bitten and becomes a zombie himself. It is Stephen who ultimately cannot let go of the good life, represented by the mall, loses his cool and sets off a small scale war when he shoots one of the bikers. It is the zombies who win in the violent, gory climax, taking the violence of the zombies one step further by tearing the bikers to pieces.

Romero dismantles the idea as we know it and in doing so releases his two agonists from the repressions that had previously governed them. More specifically it explores (and explodes) the two dominant couple relationships of our culture and its cinema, the heterosexual couple (moving inevitably toward marriage and its traditional male/female roles) and the male 'buddy' relationship with its evasive denial of sexuality.

The heterosexual couple (an embryonic family as Fran is pregnant) begins as a variation of the norm. They are not legally married and the women is allowed a semblance of independence through her career; but as soon as the two are together the

conventional assumptions operate. It is Stephen who flies the helicopter and carries a gun - the film's major emblems of sexual/patriarchal authority. At various points in the narrative Fran nostalgically reenacts the role of female stereotype, making up her face as a doll-like image for the male gaze and skating alone on the huge ice rink - woman as spectacle without an audience.

However, in the course of the film Fran progressively assumes a genuine autonomy asserting herself against the men, insisting on possession of a gun and demanding to learn to pilot the helicopter. Romero makes it quite clear that she is only able to take on or satisfy her new found role by relinquishing her old one and this is necessary as the old social structure with all its value systems and expectations no longer applies. The pivotal scene is the parody of a romantic dinner with flowers and candlelight - the white couple being waited on by the black - where Fran rejects Stephen's ring, the symbol of traditional union, saying "We can't Stephen, not now, it wouldn't be real". The shot of them in bed afterwards staring into space illustrates how redundant their relationship has become like the thousand of dollars used for Peter and

Stephen's poker game, it has no value because there is no longer a context for it.

*Dawn of the Dead* takes up and comments on the buddy relationship of countless Hollywood movies and the repression of the sexual undercurrents through the developing mutual attachment between Roger and Peter. Neither man shows any sexual interest in Fran, yet both are blocked by conditioning from admitting to any in each other. Hence the channelling of Rogers energies into violence and aggression, his uncontrolled zest in slaughter presented as a display for his friend. The true nature of the relationship can be tacitly acknowledged only after Roger's death, in the symbolic orgasm of the spilling of the champagne bottle over his grave.

Both the film's central relationships are broken by the death of one of the partners. The two who die are those who cannot escape the repressions of their conditioning whilst the survivors are those who have shown themselves capable of autonomy and self-awareness. Romero chooses not to provide a traditional happy ending where the two survivors become romantically attached,

this could well have the effect of restoring a conventional relationship with all the repressions associated with it. Instead we have the woman piloting the helicopter as the man relinquishes his life to the zombies. Romero brings his two surviving protagonists to the point where work can begin on creating norms for a new social order and a new structure of relationships - a context in which the

presence of a third survivor, Fran's unborn child, points the way to potential change.

The enormous success of the film suggests that audiences had become desensitised to horror watching real life horrors in the form of news reports from Vietnam. The film also provided a humorous form of escapism which was very much in tune with the times. America was

experiencing a social crisis but it was also a time of mass - and mad - consumerism. Dawn of the Dead allowed the viewer to lose themselves in 'a fun gun happy', 'a mad world of the mall' and so while playing on their insecurities that seem as problems may arise in social mobility so

1968

1968

1968









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Also starring TERRY WAYNE · DOUGLAS WILMER  
and Guest Star DAVID ADDAMS

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